

# Northern Great Plains Network

## *Inventory and Monitoring Monthly Report*

February 2001

Greetings to the Northern Great Plains Network! February has been a month for continuing the data mining process and enlisting the help of subject matter experts. We are making definite progress in gathering the additional information needed for our inventory study plan.

*Lists of expected vertebrate species:* During February, a list of vertebrate species expected to occur in each of our 13 parks was compiled from the natural heritage program lists, field guides, atlases, previous inventory reports and other sources. The lists were sent to the park I&M representatives and subject matter experts for review. The following is a list of experts currently reviewing the lists:

### North Dakota

Fish: Fred Rychman, District Fisheries Biologist, North Dakota Game and Fish Dept.  
Herps: Dr. Robert Newman, University of North Dakota  
Birds: Doug Johnson, USGS-BRD, Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center  
Mammals: Dr. Rick Sweitzer, University of North Dakota

### South Dakota

Fish: Doug Backlund, South Dakota Natural Heritage Program (most of the lists had been reviewed previously for the fish inventory planned this year)  
Herps: Brian Smith, Black Hills State University  
Birds: Richard Peterson, South Dakota Ornithologists Union  
Mammals: Doug Backlund, South Dakota Natural Heritage Program (Doug also provided a second opinion on the other taxa)

### Nebraska

Fish: Dr. Richard Stasiak, University of Nebraska at Omaha  
Herps: Dr. Royce Ballinger, University of Nebraska at Lincoln  
Birds: John Dinan, Nebraska Natural Heritage Program  
Mammals: Dr. Hugh Genoways, University of Nebraska at Lincoln

### Wyoming

Lists of undocumented, expected species were already available through reports done by Dr. David Armstrong for DETO and FOLA, and through our preparation for the fish inventories. However, additional input was sought from the following individuals:  
Herps: Brian Smith, Black Hills State University  
Birds: Richard Peterson, South Dakota Ornithologists Union  
Mammals: Doug Backlund, South Dakota Natural Heritage Program

I requested the experts' comments by mid-March and I have already received some comments. Their input will be very helpful in assessing the completeness of our previous inventories.

List of Expected Vascular Plant Species: Since developing lists of plant species is significantly more time consuming than vertebrates, and outside my area of expertise, we had requested funds for small contracts to assist in completing this task. Walt Fertig, from the Wyoming Natural Heritage Program, will be developing lists for FOLA and DETO. I am in the process of developing a small contract with Cindy Reed, a private consultant, to develop lists of expected plant species for the South Dakota and North Dakota parks. Cindy has a M.S. in Biology from South Dakota State University, has been a consultant for 10 years and is highly recommended by botanists in the area. An assessment of the completeness of vascular plant inventories was done for AGFO and SCBL through the Midwest region in 1995. Expected plant lists have already been compiled through previous inventory work in and near NIOB and MNRR which will be used to plan inventories. I plan to have at least draft lists of expected plant species for all the parks by the time we meet in May.

As a side note, through my phone calls to set up this work, I found out that the Nebraska Natural Heritage Program is doing plant inventories in all of its state park lands this year which will assist our effort to inventory plants at MNRR.

Literature Review/Data Mining: I have a couple of leads on people available to do a small contract to review published literature, acquire copies of any documents new to us and add the references to NRBib. This will continue to be developed over the next month.

Ongoing Efforts:

- The paperwork to hire the data management technician is being reviewed by the staff at Wind Cave
- NPSpp continues to be updated by a part-time clerk at THRO (Becky Perdaems) and by sending appropriate files to the I&M WASO staff
- Many of you have responded to my request for ANCS+ files, I really appreciate your efforts to forward that data. Once I have all of the parks' files, I will forward them to the I&M WASO office for conversion to NPSpp.

Coming up:

- Continue process to hire data management technician
- Complete plant list contract and literature review contract
- Initiate compliance procedure for FY01 fish inventories
- Compare lists of expected vertebrate species reviewed by experts to list of species already documented to occur in parks and determine percent complete